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DEC 1951 51-48

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Legnowo Ammunition Plant: Location/Construction/ Production/Working Conditions/1952 Explosion

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DATE DISTR. 27 Apr 1954

NO. OF PAGES 3

NO. OF ENCLS. 1

SUPP. TO REPORT NO.

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1. at the Legnowo ammunition plant the workers were not permitted to move around very much. There were also very strict military controls.

Location

2. The Legnowo ammunition plant is located southeast of Bydgoszcz near the Wisla River. It is in a trapezoid which borders the irrigated meadow land in the outskirts of Brdyujscie in the north, the Bydgoszcz-Inowroclaw railroad in the west, the Bydgoszcz-Torun railroad in the east, and the road connecting the small settlement of Platnowo with an old gravel pit located southwest of Platnow in the south.

Construction

3. The plant was constructed during World War II by the German military authorities. It remained almost completely intact throughout the war and during the Soviet offensive in 1945. Some reconstruction has been done in recent years. It is said that a new part of the plant is now being built by the Warsaw military authorities on the western side of the Bydgoszcz-Inowroclaw railroad, deep in the forest.

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Security

4. The whole terrain is surrounded by a wire fence and is under the control of a special KBW detachment delegated to Legnowo from the Bydgoszcz KBW battalion. Entrance to the plant is through two gates, one at the north from the side of the Legnowo railroad station, and the other at the south from the road to Platnowo. This road connects the plant area with the loading and unloading facilities in Platnowo.

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Living Conditions for Workers

5. "There are around 3,000 workers presently employed in the Legnowo plant. Quite a number of the workers live in the two plant barracks which are located in the north of the terrain outside of the plant premises. The barracks that is nearest the plant is equipped with a shopping center which is extremely well supplied with commodities that are quite often not for sale in the nearby Bydgoszcz shops. Prices on various items are lower in the shopping center. Special purchasing cards are issued by the plant administrative offices for admission to this purchasing center. The rental fees were nominal as they amounted to merely five zlotys per month. the plant canteen is located inside the factory compound. The food was very rich and plentiful. meat every day and even received real coffee which was a luxury.

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6. Wages and Salaries

"The wages and salaries of workers and employees the Legnowo plant are much higher than those of other industrial enterprises in this area a semi-skilled worker received around 1,500 zlotys monthly.

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Safety Measures

7. "For work each worker was equipped with a special overall suit, rubber shoes, rubber gloves and face protectors with special eyeglasses. This luxurious equipment for the workers is proof enough that the factory is considered one of the most vital production plants and that it is under complete military control.

Production

8. "The whole plant is divided into eleven sections (called 'objekty') numbering from 100 to 1100. Each section comprises one main building surrounded by auxiliary bunkers used for workshops or for storing material. this is the principal factory in Poland for the production of various types of hand grenades. Production lines in the different sections are as follows:

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Section	Production
100	No information available
200	Gas hand grenades (not poison gas but various types of fog-producing grenades)
300	Production of powder for the filling of the grenades
400	Preparation of the filling mixture for incendiary grenades. Special oxygen is manufactured here.
500	Filling of hand grenades of the handle-type shape
600	No information available
700	Similar to that of Section 200, various gas grenades. An oxygen section is attached.
800	Filling of grenades of egg-type shape
900	Certain production of a sulphur mixture
1000	No information available
1100	Filling of grenades for fog production, grenades of egg-type shape.

The entire production and manufacturing sections are located in the middle of the plant premises.

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1952 Explosion

9. An explosion occurred in Section 800 in November 1952 during the night shift when the number of workers is normally reduced. For unexplained reasons, the explosion happened in the works hall on the first floor (which is on the ground level; th ground floor is below the ground level). Seventy people work in this hall some of them on the eight filling machines and the rest as auxiliary helpers. The factory work is only mechanized to a certain extent and much of the auxiliary labor is performed by manual workers. Fortunately, the explosion came in intervals so that nearly all the workers had time to escape from the hall. As a result of the explosion, five or six workers were killed and about 15 died in the hospital from injuries. The explosion was so violent that many windows in the distant county hospital on Curie-Sklodowska Street were broken.

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the day after the explosion a special military mission accompanied by two Soviet generals came to investigate the plant. Within a few days a military court was held in the plant compound. Although no direct culprit could be found, the whole management was changed and some managers punished. The general manager, Inu, Kaczmarek, was sentenced to 15 years of prison for 'carelessness'.

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ENCLOSURE (A): A Map of the Legnowo Ammunition

This map is drawn to the scale of 1: 25,000. The following legend applies:

Description of the Legnowo Ammunition Plant to complet

1. Railroad Station
2. Streetcar stop. The new streetcar line connects Legnowo with Bydgoszcz. There are express streetcars on this run which do not stop at any in between points.
3. Factory barracks quarters
4. Administration Building
5. Guardhouse
6. Dispensary
7. Northern Gate
8. Personnel Office
9. Motor pool and gasoline station
10. Factory fire brigade
11. Main management building
12. Factory canteen
13. Magazine
14. Magazine
15. Boiler house
16. Coal dump
17. Crane (not in use)
18. Coke dump
19. Area of production halls and bunkers equipped with railroad sidings
20. Worksnors
21. Inside unloading railroad yard
22. Machine bunkers
23. Old factory used as a magazine and for packing of the grenades. Railroad tracks lead to this old factory.
24. Southern Gate
25. ABW guard company barracks
26. Forestry house

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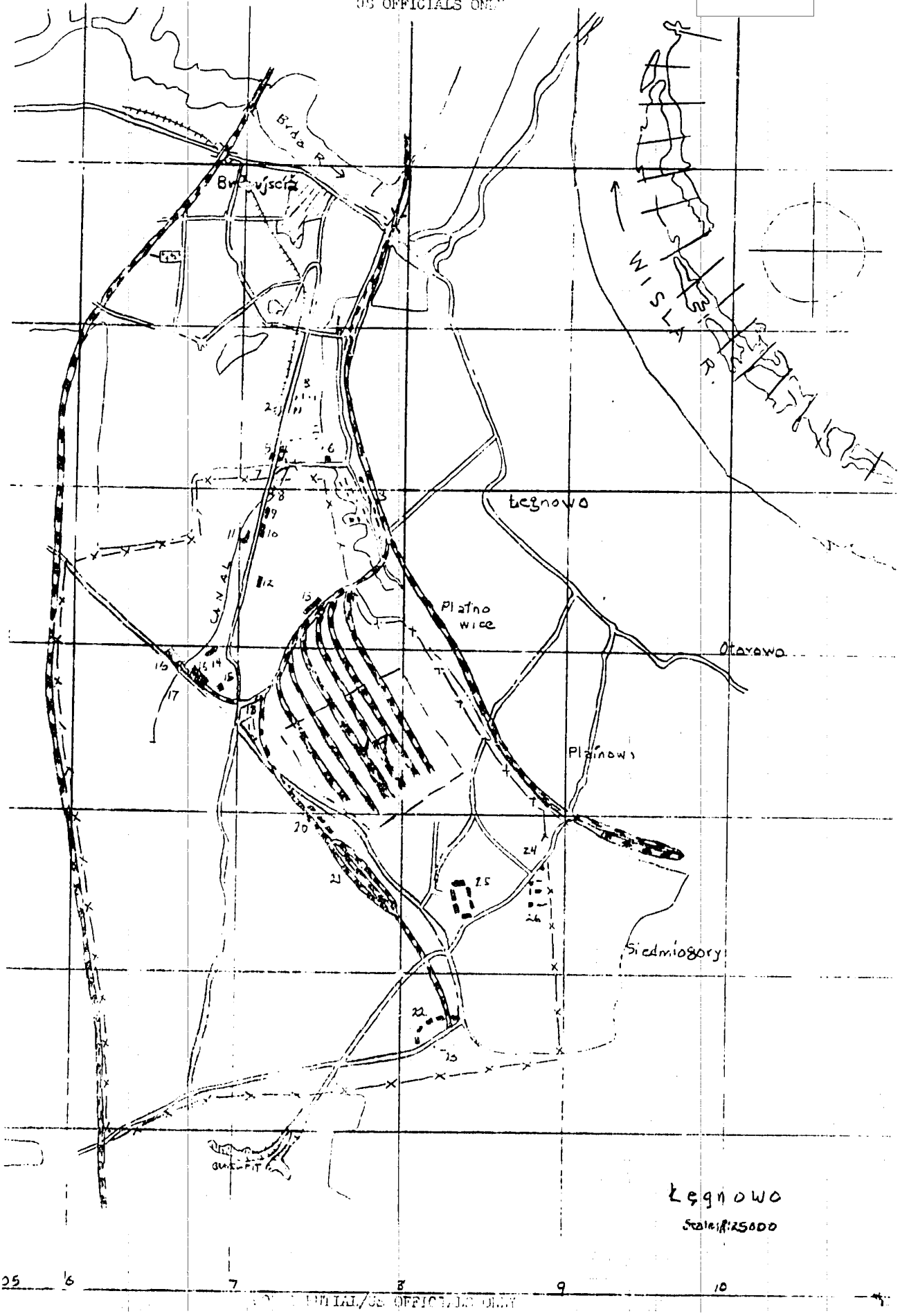

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